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Joint Inspection Unit

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Note by the Secretary-General

The Secretary-General has the honour to transmit to the members of the General Assembly the report of the Joint Inspection Unit entitled "Extension of water-related technical cooperation projects to end-beneficiaries: bridging the gap between the normative and the operational in the United Nations system (case studies in two African countries)" (JIU/REP/2002/4).

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EXTENSION OF WATER-RELATED TECHNICAL COOPERATION PROJECTS TO END-BENEFICIARIES:

BRIDGING THE GAP BETWEEN THE NORMATIVE AND THE OPERATIONAL IN THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM (CASE STUDIES IN TWO AFRICAN COUNTRIES)

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ANNEX I		

ACRONYMS

ACC	Administrative Committee on Coordination (now CEB)
ACC/SWR	Administrative Committee on Coordination/Subcommittee on Water Resources
ANDEA	National Authority for Water and Sanitation (in Madagascar)
ASIP	Agriculture Sector Investment Programme
CCA	Common Country Assessment
CEB	United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (formerly ACC)
CENRD	Committee on Energy and Natural Resources for Development
CSD	Commission on Sustainable Development
DSD	Division for Sustainable Development
D-WASHE	District Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Education
ECA	Economic Commission for Africa
ECE	Economic Commission for Europe
ECLAC	Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
ESCAP	Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
ESCWA	Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency
IDA	International Development Association
IEC	Information, Education and Communication
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
ILO	International Labour Organization
IMF	International Monetary Fund
INSTRAW	International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women
IPTRID	International Programme for Technology and Research in Irrigation and Drainage
RWSS	Rural Water Supply and Sanitation
SIDS	Small Island Developing States
SIWUP	Small-holder Irrigation and Water Use Programme
SPFS	Special Programme for Food Security
SSPA	Sector Strategy and Plan of Action Paper
TC	Technical Cooperation
TCP	Technical Cooperation Projects
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDG	United Nations Development Group
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFIP	United Nations Fund for International Partnerships
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UN-Habitat	United Nations Human Settlements Programme
UNHCR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services
UNU	United Nations University
V-WASHE	Village Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Education
WASHE	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Education
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization
WIN	Women, Irrigation and Nutrition
WMO	World Meteorological Organization
WSS	Water Supply and Sanitation

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: OBJECTIVE, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

OBJECTIVE:

To identify problems encountered by and opportunities available to the United Nations system in the field of water-related technical cooperation projects, including ways of strengthening collaboration among its organizations, with a view to maximizing the benefits to the end-beneficiaries.

CONCLUSIONS

(*a*) The review of the activities of the United Nations system organizations in the area of water resources carried out by the Inspector revealed a gap between those conducted at the normative level, on the one hand, and the operational activities followed at the field level, on the other. Such a gap contributes to the difficulties encountered by the United Nations system in its search for desirable synergies and complementarities in its interventions at the field level, thus limiting the benefits that could be derived by the targeted population from such interventions. More actions are needed to bridge this gap and to foster better coordination and collaboration among the United Nations system organizations involved in this area.

(*b*) Some of these actions should be taken upstream at the level of the ACC Subcommittee on Water Resources (ACC/SWR),[1] which acts as task manager for chapter 18 of Agenda 21 (see paras. 12-22 below) and is mandated, among other functions, to enhance the coordination of country-level activities by the organizations and bodies of the United Nations system concerning the application of integrated approaches to the development, management and use of water resources (see paras. 23-24 below). The purpose of this first set of actions is to place more focus on this particular function in the activities of ACC/SWR, while at the same time empowering it with means and tools to assume such a function, including by providing improved guidance and networking and ensuring better flow of information and interaction, with a view to bringing this inter-agency coordination mechanism closer to the needs and realities at the country level.

(*c*) The second set of actions should be taken at the country level to enhance coordination and collaboration among the United Nations organizations at the field level, including through a better management of the flow of information and interaction with ACC/SWR, facilitate the application of integrated approaches to the development, management and use of water resources, and maximize the benefits delivered to the communities targeted by water-related technical cooperation projects (TCP).[2]

(*d*) It should be noted in this context that the Economic and Social Council, having considered the annual overview report of ACC for 2000 (E/2001/55), invited ACC "to ensure that the reform of its subsidiary machinery strengthens inter-agency bodies and processes which have specific mandates from intergovernmental bodies, particularly those

[1] During the preparation of this report, the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) was in the process of reforming its machinery and exploring options and ideas for reforming its subsidiary machinery, including ACC/SWR, which is also the object of review and of various recommendations in the report. In this context, and in its decision 2001/321 of 24 October 2001, the Economic and Social Council "...agreed to the change of the name of the Administrative Committee on Coordination to the United Nations System's Chief Executives Board for Coordination, without the change in its mandate...". While CEB restructured its own machinery, a decision regarding its subsidiary machinery was, however, postponed until after the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, South Africa (26 August–4 September 2002). The first set of actions is intended to be undertaken by ACC/SWR or its successor at the upstream level.

[2] The report focuses on the United Nations system machinery and activities at the global and country levels, thus recommending specific actions at these two levels. The report did not review the United Nations machinery or activities at the regional level. Notwithstanding this, the need to enhance coordination at the regional level, and the important role of the regional commissions and the regional inter-agency water bodies in this regard, was strongly emphasized by some officials, as reflected in para. 47 below.

related to the coordinated implementation of outcomes of United Nations conferences and summits, as well as those adopted by the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly".[3] It is hoped that the recommendations of the report would contribute to the achievement of that objective, as expressed by Member States.

ACTIONS RECOMMENDED AT THE UPSTREAM LEVEL

(*e*) Tracing and selecting projects to be used as case studies for this report proved difficult. This was partially due to the absence of a single "one-stop" reliable database for United Nations system TCP in the area of water resources. Such a situation limits the transparency and the potential for better coordination/collaboration among the United Nations organizations (and other donors) at the country level (see paras. 42 and 98-101 below).

RECOMMENDATION 1

The United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) should request ACC/SWR to establish a database of the water-related TCP executed or funded by the United Nations organizations. The database, which could be classified both thematically and geographically, should be maintained and continuously updated by the ACC/SWR secretariat. It should contain, inter alia, information about the objectives, nature and activities of the posted projects, the region of intervention in the recipient country, and the targeted end-beneficiaries.

(*f*) Several United Nations organizations have developed guidelines covering some of their activities in the water sector, and some joint guidelines have been developed incorporating specific intersectoral aspects. However, common and comprehensive guidelines for the United Nations system organizations that would provide guidance for the United Nations agencies (and other development actors at the national and international levels) in their implementation of water-related development projects remain absent (see para. 45 below). Although the Inspector is aware of the difficulties entailed by the effort to elaborate such guidelines, he believes that for such purpose ACC/SWR could build on much of the material and expertise available within its membership and could seek further financial and expert assistance from certain donors.[4]

RECOMMENDATION 2

CEB should request ACC/SWR, through a joint arrangement among its members, to elaborate common and comprehensive guidelines for the implementation of the United Nations development and management projects in the water sector. The guidelines should incorporate, to the extent possible, the intersectoral aspects of the water projects with the aim of fostering inter-agency collaboration at the country level. They should also ensure, inter alia, that the relevant objectives and activities included in Agenda 21 are well observed throughout the overall cycle of the water projects.

(*g*) While each organization member of ACC/SWR tries to incorporate the policy issues raised and agreed upon at its meetings (for example on gender issues), this is done on an individual basis and using different approaches. The results and decisions taken at such meetings are not systematically communicated to the country level for consideration or feedback (see para. 40 below). There is a need to provide more visibility to the work of ACC/SWR and its decisions (including to Member States), and a constantly updated means of communication and interaction between ACC/SWR and the United Nations offices at the country level (as well as other forums and actors involved in the water sector).

RECOMMENDATION 3

CEB should request ACC/SWR to proceed with the establishment of its web-site.[5] The web-site should, inter alia, provide substantive information about the meetings of ACC/SWR and the

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[3] Economic and Social Council decision 2001/302 of 26 July 2001.

[4] During the preparation of the report, the IPTRID secretariat (see para. 67 below) expressed interest in contributing to such effort. The experience of the European Commission in elaborating their guidelines (see footnote 30 below) could also be useful in this regard.

[5] Establishing a website for ACC/SWR was among several measures previously recommended - but not acted upon - to improve the working methods of ACC/SWR (see para. 33 below). The focus of this recommendation, however, is to relate the website to the operational activities at the country level.

decisions taken there, and provide linkages to the database and the guidelines called for in recommendations 1 and 2 above. It should also provide a means of sharing the experiences, lessons learned and best practices, as well as collaborative and complementary activities, in the water-related projects executed by the United Nations organizations and/or other donors.

(*h*) There is a lack of a systematic mechanism or arrangement within ACC/SWR to promote projects and advocate wider inter-agency participation in projects funded or executed by one or more of its members, especially if the programmes or projects do not emanate from the Subcommittee itself (see para. 41 below). Also lacking is a systematic arrangement or forum to expose, discuss and try to solve, at an upstream level, inter-agency operational problems which cannot be solved at the country level and provide a means for interaction and feedback between ACC/SWR and the field (see paras. 36-37 and 43-44 below).

RECOMMENDATION 4

CEB should request ACC/SWR to devote part of its sessions to operational issues, including: early promotion and advocacy of new programmes/projects in order to allow better synergies and complementarities in the design phase; discussion of specific operational problems involving several United Nations organizations at the country level; discussion of policy or operational issues raised to ACC/SWR by some of those operational United Nations Water Committees called for in recommendation 7 below; discussion and follow-up on joint programmes/projects emanating from the Subcommittee; and discussion of joint interventions in case of emergencies or major problems in the water sector in certain countries. Owing to the limited resources allocated by the organizations to their participation in the Subcommittee meetings, CEB should encourage ACC/SWR to resort to a wider use of modern communication technology to bring on board the technical advisers involved in the operational issues under discussion during that portion of the sessions.

(*i*) The review by the Inspector confirmed that extremely limited resources and technical capacity are available to the secretariat of ACC/SWR. This issue was mentioned repeatedly by many officials from the United Nations organizations members of ACC/SWR, as a major constraint for the Subcommittee in conducting efficiently the functions entrusted to it, in particular its required role in enhancing the coordination of country-level activities. It has also been highlighted in previous reviews of the work of ACC/SWR (see para. 46 below).

RECOMMENDATION 5

CEB should proceed to enhance the resources and technical capacity of the secretariat of ACC/SWR, including through the provision of one or two full-time Professional posts. The(se) post(s) should be filled by candidates having technical expertise in the area of water resources and information technology in order to enable the Subcommittee secretariat to discharge more efficiently its mandated functions and to allow it to undertake new activities such as those described in recommendations 1 to 4. Funding for these posts could be provided either through an agreed jointly financed arrangement among CEB members participating in the Subcommittee,[*] or sought externally.

ACTIONS RECOMMENDED AT THE DOWNSTREAM LEVEL (COUNTRY LEVEL)

(*j*) It was noted during the field missions that, notwithstanding the efforts deployed in the preparation of the Common Country Assessment (CCA) and United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), the exercise remains largely academic and the translation of UNDAF into collaborative, coordinated and integrated operational interventions by the United Nations organizations remains far from being realized in general, and in the water sector in particular. In addition, and given the limited resources available to each organization, the impact on the living standards of the targeted communities of projects carried out individually by the United Nations organizations, especially in the water sector, is rather limited. Such individual

[*] An agreed jointly financed arrangement among the United Nations organizations members of ACC/SWR would also promote the sense of ownership of the secretariat among the members of ACC/SWR, and could ensure more stability to its secretariat.

interventions fail, therefore, to realize the aim of maximizing the benefits for the targeted communities and optimizing the impact of the United Nations system operational interventions on those communities (see paras. 104 to 106 below).

RECOMMENDATION 6

The General Assembly may wish to request, through the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) and the Economic and Social Council, that the United Nations Resident Coordinators enhance and complement the current UNDAF exercise with an "Operational UNDAF" process in which the United Nations organizations, working at the country level in general and in the water sector in particular, would, to the extent possible and within their respective mandates, orient their programmes/projects in the recipient country towards integrated interventions where the elements of synergies and complementarities are perceived in the design phase of joint programmes and projects.[7] The Assembly may also wish to recommend, through CSD and the Economic and Social Council, that such integrated interventions be initiated in common selected zones in need within the country and used as pilot programmes/projects, to be extended at the national level through the national and local authorities and with the assistance of other donors.

(*k*) The absence of an institutional arrangement at the country level encompassing the United Nations organizations active in the water sector in a particular country contributes to the lack of, or inappropriate, inter-agency coordination/collaboration at the country level. It deprives the United Nations organizations involved in water-related projects in the country of a systematic mechanism of communication, interaction and exchange of experiences, as well as of coordination vis-à-vis the other donors and national authorities (see paras. 39 and 99-100 below). It also contributes to the communication gap and lack of interaction between the activities undertaken and decisions agreed upon at the upstream level within ACC/SWR and their systematic and coordinated implementation at the country level (see paras. 36-37 and 39-40 below).

RECOMMENDATION 7

In conjunction with recommendation 6 above, and as a means of concretizing it in the water sector, the General Assembly may wish to request, through CSD and the Economic and Social Council, that the United Nations Resident Coordinators establish, as appropriate, operational water committees with the participation of the United Nations organizations involved in water-related projects in the country, represented by their senior water expert(s) at the country office.[8] The Assembly may also wish to recommend, through CSD and the Economic and Social Council, that such committees be entrusted, inter alia, with the following functions: to enhance coordination/collaboration and exchange of experiences among its members; to explore the potential for synergies and complementarities among their country programmes/projects; to elaborate coordinated and concerted United Nations approaches towards the relevant national authorities, as well as towards the donors and other non-United Nations actors involved in the water sector in the country; to implement and oversee other inter-agency activities at the country level, including those contained in recommendations 8 to 10; to work as an interlocutor of ACC/SWR as and when needed, and to disseminate and discuss the means to implement the relevant decisions of the latter, as appropriate.

(*l*) Often, different participatory approaches or information, education and communication (IEC) techniques are used by the various United Nations organizations (and other actors) involved in water-related projects in the same region, leading to incoherence in the sensitization of the targeted

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[7] The General Assembly, in Part IV of its resolution 56/201 of 21 December 2001 on "Triennial policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system", noted that "while progress has been made since the introduction of the common country assessment and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework in its pilot phase, there still is a need to continue to improve the preparatory process and the quality of those instruments...".

[8] The General Assembly, in Part VII of its resolution 56/201, reaffirmed that "the resident coordinator system...is a key instrument for the efficient and effective coordination of the operational activities for development of the United Nations system...".

communities. In other instances, different United Nations organizations resort to the same non-governmental organizations in place to do basically the same tasks but with different approaches (depending on the organization's philosophy and approach), resulting sometimes in confusion within the targeted communities and in duplication of effort and use of resources of the United Nations organizations involved (see paras. 40 and 99-100 below).

RECOMMENDATION 8

The General Assembly may wish to request, through CSD and the Economic and Social Council, that the United Nations Resident Coordinators ensure that the United Nations organizations involved in water-related projects would, where appropriate, harmonize their participatory approaches and IEC techniques in the field, and that the operational water committees, called for in recommendation 7 above would facilitate and oversee such efforts, including through the exchange of information and experiences among its members and by holding seminars or other forums of interaction with non-United Nations actors serving the same or similar communities.

(*m*) Although some United Nations organizations' pilot programmes/projects are generally successful, their extension at the national level does not always achieve the same desired level of success. The deficiencies accompanying the extension process are largely attributed to limited national and local capacities. Such deficiencies need to be checked and addressed regularly in a manner that would ensure the sustainability of such programmes/projects (see paras. 108-109 below).

RECOMMENDATION 9

The General Assembly may wish to request, through CSD and the Economic and Social Council, that the United Nations Resident Coordinators ensure that a follow-up is conducted by the United Nations organizations to their pilot programmes/projects extended at the national level, including to the pilot integrated interventions advocated in recommendation 6 above, and that such follow-ups are conducted in collaboration with the national authorities at reasonable intervals and that their results are used to enhance and consolidate the relevant national and local capacities. The Assembly, through CSD and the Economic and Social Council, may wish to invite donors who support the extension process to consider providing funding for that purpose.

(*n*) The comparative advantage of the United Nations organizations in providing technical assistance to or executing water projects is not systematically taken into account at the country level. For instance, while focal points among the United Nations organizations are clearly assigned within ACC/SWR for each of the key areas identified in chapter 18 of Agenda 21, based in principle on the comparative advantage of each United Nations organization and its leading role in the key selected area (see para. 24 below), this arrangement is not systematically considered or adhered to at the country level. An appropriate coordinated division of labour is mostly needed in countries where national water policies and plans, as well as relevant national institutions, are still in the making, in order to ensure rational and targeted service delivery to the communities, while at the same time supporting the strategic tasks of institution-building and elaborating sustainable national policies (see paras. 37-38 and 112-114 below).

RECOMMENDATION 10

The General Assembly may wish to request, through CSD and the Economic and Social Council, that the United Nations Resident Coordinators, in consultation with the operational water committees called for in recommendation 7 above, ensure the optimal use of the experiences and resources of the latters' member organizations at the country level through an appropriate coordinated division of labour that should take into account the comparative advantages of each organization, in particular in supporting the strategic tasks of institution-building and elaborating sustainable national policies.

INTRODUCTION

1. A few years ago, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) submitted a proposal to the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) to conduct a study on the extension of TCP to end-beneficiaries.[9] The year 2000, as it marked fifty years since the launching of the development cooperation activities of the United Nations,[10] offered the Unit an opportunity to revive the consideration of the IAEA proposal and other ideas within the Unit related to the review of technical cooperation (TC) activities in the United Nations system. The exercise led to the preparation of this report, included in the work programme of the Unit for 2001.

2. Through the years, TCP have been an important and concrete manifestation of the support provided by the United Nations organizations to developing countries for building and enhancing their national and regional capacities for development. However, there is a constant need to ensure that the benefits derived from these projects are maximized to the end-beneficiaries,[11] including through strengthened collaboration at all levels among the United Nations system organizations and an optimal use of resources and capacities of the System and its organizations.

3. Since the TC activities of the United Nations system expanded over the years to cover various, if not all, aspects related to the economic and social well-being of peoples, the Inspector believed that the selection of a specific area of TC would help provide a more focused approach to the report and a better review of the activities undertaken by the United Nations organizations in that selected area. This, in its turn, should lead to a better achievement of the overall objective of the report as described in the Executive Summary.

4. In this context, cooperation in the field of freshwater resources offered the Inspector a most interesting area for the focus of the report in view of the fact that water resources is a major area of TC in the United Nations system; the involvement of many United Nations organizations in this area; the various aspects of cooperation in this area; and the increasing and special importance given by Member States to cooperation in this area in view of an increased shortage in, and demand for, freshwater resources in various regions and countries around the world.[12]

5. The Inspector was also guided in this choice by the resolve expressed by the heads of State and Government of the States Members of the United Nations in the United Nations Millennium Declaration to halve, by the year 2015, the proportion of people who are unable to reach or to afford safe drinking water, and to stop the unsustainable exploitation of water resources by developing water management strategies at the regional, national and local levels which promote both equitable access and adequate supplies.[13] Indeed, water and sanitation, health, and agricultural productivity (all directly related to freshwater issues and activities) were identified by the United Nations Secretary-General as three of the five specific areas where the World Summit on Sustainable Development (Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August-4 September 2002) should aim

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[9] Making this proposal in 1999, the IAEA secretariat noted that the results of successful technical assistance projects sometimes end at the demonstration stage without any broad impact. It added that an IAEA evaluation pointed to the fact that "although the importance of extending the transferred technologies ... to the end-user ... has repeatedly been mentioned ... no reference could be found to such an extension having actually taken place" (IAEA-PDE-95/01).

[10] The General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council established the Expanded Programme of Technical Assistance (EPTA) in 1950.

[11] Bearing in mind that improving the well-being of the people is the ultimate objective of United Nations system activities, the end-beneficiaries are defined for the purposes of this report as the population/local communities, including women, children and youth/farmers who are directly targeted by the United Nations TCP selected as case studies for the report.

[12] According to forecasts, two thirds of humanity will face shortages of clean freshwater by 2025. By that time, the world will also need better water management to grow food for an additional 2 billion inhabitants (United Nations "World Water Development Report, the State of the World's Freshwater Resources"). Despite the United Nations and global efforts deployed, 1.1 billion people in the world remain without access to improved water supply, and 2.4 billion are without access to improved sanitation (WHO/UNICEF "Global Water Supply and Sanitation Assessment 2000 Report").

[13] General Assembly resolution 55/2 of 18 September 2000.

to achieve concrete results to better the lives of all human beings, while protecting the environment.[14]

6. The special plight of Africa, and its rural population in particular, drew the Inspector's attention in this field.[15] It is no coincidence that the heads of State and Government highlighted in the United Nations Millennium Declaration their commitment to meeting the special needs of Africa, and expressed in this context their resolve to take special measures to address the challenges of poverty eradication and sustainable development in the continent; hence the geographical focus on Africa in the final selection of the water-related TCP in Zambia and Madagascar as case studies for the report (see paragraphs 25 to 30 for more details on the methodology used in this regard).

7. Notwithstanding this focus, there has been enough anecdotal and other evidence gathered and reviewed during the preparation of the report[16] suggesting that the findings in the report are generally true in other countries and regions of the world where technical assistance is provided by the organizations of the United Nations system working in the field of freshwater resources.

8. To achieve the objective of the report, the Inspector reviewed the activities and performance of the United Nations system machinery in the area of water resources at both levels of intervention by the system, that is the normative or upstream level (generally followed at Headquarters level), and the operational or downstream level (generally followed at the field level). The setting and the methodology elaborated in chapter I of the report paved the way for the Inspector's review and findings at both levels.

9. The experience of the report proved that it was most difficult to identify and establish direct linkage between the activities of the United Nations system machinery at the normative level, on the one hand, and the operational activities conducted at the field level, on the other (especially given the large degree of decentralization now in place for field activities in most United Nations organizations). The Inspector tried nonetheless to explore ways in which these two levels of activities could (and should) meet and interact for a better functioning of both, and above all for better-maximized benefits for the people targeted by these activities. In this context, he attempted to come up with concrete, workable and achievable recommendations for the system.

10. It cannot be emphasized enough, though, that whatever measures are taken by the United Nations system machinery, they cannot be substitutes for the measures and activities decided upon or undertaken by national Governments, whether through the relevant intergovernmental bodies or at the national level. Indeed, more coordination and coherence at those levels would provide better guidance and accountability to the United Nations system machinery, and could only benefit the people in need in the developing countries.

11. The Inspector is grateful for the opportunity provided to him during the preparation of this report to have met and discussed the views and needs of some African local communities in Zambia and Madagascar, and wishes to thank them for their cooperation and interaction. He would also like to record his appreciation to the United Nations teams in both countries, as well as to the numerous United Nations system, government and local officials who shared with him their relevant experiences and expertise.

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[14] The other two areas are energy as well as biodiversity and ecosystem management. Statement of the United Nations Secretary-General "Towards a Sustainable Future", the American Museum of Natural History's annual environmental lecture, New York, 14 May 2002.

[15] Africa has the lowest water supply coverage of any region, with only 62% of the population having access to improved water supply. It also has a poor 60% sanitation coverage of its population. The situation is much worse in the rural areas where the access to improved water supply and sanitation coverage hardly reaches 47% and 45%, respectively, compared with 85% and 84%, respectively, in urban areas (WHO/UNICEF "Global Water Supply and Sanitation Assessment 2000 Report"). Moreover, in sub-Saharan Africa, about one third of the population lack sufficient food (Kofi Annan, We the Children: Meeting the Promises of the World Summit for Children, United Nations publication, Sales No. E.01.XX.19, September 2001).

[16] See, for instance, the reports of the Secretary-General "Water: a key resource for sustainable development" (E/CN.17/2001/PC/17) and "Activities of the organizations of the United Nations system in the field of freshwater resources" (E/CN.17/1998/3).

I. SETTING AND METHODOLOGY

A. THE SETTING

1. Basis for action and the key programme areas for the freshwater sector

12. The fundamental basis for action, including for the activities of the United Nations system organizations in the field of water resources lies mainly in the Mar del Plata Action Plan adopted by the United Nations Water Conference in 1977,[17] and in the relevant provisions of Agenda 21 adopted by the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in 1992[18] in particular those of chapter 18.

13. Seven key programme areas for the freshwater sector were identified in chapter 18 of Agenda 21. Specific objectives, activities to be undertaken, and the means of implementation were elaborated for each area. These areas include:

(*a*) Integrated water resources development and management;

(*b*) Water resources assessment;

(*c*) Protection of water resources, water quality and aquatic ecosystems;

(*d*) Drinking-water supply and sanitation;

(*e*) Water and sustainable urban development;

(*f*) Water for sustainable food production and rural development;

(*g*) Impacts of climate change on water resources.

2. Local communities and the key programme areas for the freshwater sector

14. The role of local communities is generally acknowledged across the board in the freshwater sector, but it is most emphasized at the level of the objectives in three of the key programme areas identified in chapter 18.

Integrated water resources development and management

15. One of the principal objectives to be pursued in this area is to design, implement and evaluate projects and programmes that are both economically efficient and socially appropriate within clearly defined strategies, based on an approach of full public participation, including that of women, youth, indigenous people and local communities, in water management policy-making and decision-making.

16. Among the activities to be undertaken in this area by States, through bilateral or multilateral cooperation, including with the United Nations and other relevant organizations as appropriate, is the development of public participatory techniques and their implementation in decision-making, particularly the enhancement of the role of women in water resources planning and management. States are also encouraged, as appropriate, to delegate water resources management to the lowest appropriate level, including decentralization of government services to local authorities, private enterprises and communities.

Drinking-water supply and sanitation

17. One of the guiding principles of the programme objectives is community management of services, backed by measures to strengthen local institutions in implementing and sustaining water and sanitation programmes.

18. The activities recommended for implementation in this area include: encouragement of water development and management based on a participatory approach, involving users, planners and policy makers at all levels; application of the principle that decisions are to be taken at the lowest appropriate level, with public consultation and involvement of users in the planning and implementation of water projects; encouragement of the local population, especially women, youth, indigenous people and local communities, in water management; linkages between national water plans and community management of local waters.

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[17] Report of the United Nations Water Conference, Mar del Plata, 14-25 March 1977 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.77.II.A.12), chap. I.

[18] Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and Corrigenda) vol. I: Resolutions adopted by the Conference, resolution 1, annex II.

Water for sustainable food production and rural development

19. The objectives for this area highlight key strategic principles for holistic and integrated environmentally sound management of water resources in the rural context. Among the principles is that local communities must participate in all phases of water management, ensuring the full involvement of women in view of their crucial role in the practical day-to-day supply, management and use of water; and that it is necessary to recognize and actively support the role of rural populations, with particular emphasis on women.

20. Among the activities recommended in this area are the promotion of community ownership; the support to water-users' groups with a view to improving management performance at the local level; and the development of small-scale irrigation and water-supply for humans and livestock and for water and soil conservation.

3. Local communities and implementation of Agenda 21

21. Since the adoption of Agenda 21, the important role of local communities in the freshwater sector has been repeatedly emphasized by Member States in several forums. In 1994, CSD, at its second session (E/1994/33/Rev.1–E/CN.17/1994/20/Rev.1, para. 136) recommended that countries give priority attention to the integrated management, mobilization and use of water resources in a holistic manner, while stressing the importance of the involvement of local communities, in particular of women. The Commission further realized that, in order to create changes through the new approaches brought about by Agenda 21, special attention should be given, inter alia, to the involvement of those people who were most directly affected by water management strategies in the planning of water infrastructure projects, as well as to efforts to enable the integrated management of water at the lowest appropriate level and shifting to a system of sustainable demand management (ibid., para. 139(d)).

22. In 1997, the General Assembly, at its special session to review and appraise the implementation of Agenda 21 (Rio + 5), emphasized, inter alia, the urgent need to ensure the continued participation of local communities, and in particular women, in the management of water resources development and use. And in 1998, at its sixth session (E/1998/2–E/CN.17/1998/20), CSD encouraged Governments, inter alia, to consider how best to devolve responsibilities to the lowest appropriate level for the organization and management of public water supply, sanitation services and irrigation systems, as well as water resources management within the framework of national water policies.

4. Basis for action and the United Nations system machinery in the freshwater sector

23. There is no central United Nations organization with overall responsibility for freshwater policy. The inter-agency coordination and networking in this field is assumed by ACC/SWR. The Subcommittee is composed of over 20 entities of the United Nations system involved in the field of freshwater resources (including: the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, ECA, ECE, ECLAC, ESCAP, ESCWA, FAO, UN-Habitat, IAEA, UNDP, UNEP, UNESCO, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNIDO, UNU, WHO, WMO and the World Bank). The United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs serves as the secretariat for the Subcommittee and provides substantive servicing of its annual sessions. Among its main functions, described in the report of the Inter-Agency Committee on Sustainable Development on its fourth session (ACC/1994/17, p. 35-36), the Subcommittee has:

(*a*) To monitor and review progress in the implementation of the Mar del Plata Action Plan and chapter 18 of Agenda 21 (the Subcommittee acts as task manager for chapter 18 of Agenda 21);

(*b*) To assist in the preparation of reports on issues related to water resources for submission to CSD, the Committee on Natural Resources, the Economic and Social Council, the General Assembly and the organizations and bodies of the United Nations system active in the field;

(*c*) To formulate common strategies and joint programmes and activities among the organizations and bodies of the United Nations system, including the consideration of issues related to capacity-building, institutional and human resources development and the role of women in the management of water resources for sustainable development;

(*d*) To provide a forum for the exchange of information on the work programmes of the

organizations and bodies of the United Nations system in the field of water resources;

(*e*) To enhance the coordination of country-level activities by the organizations and bodies of the United Nations system concerning the application of integrated approaches to the development, management and use of water resources.

5. ACC/SWR focal points

24. In assuming its function (a) above, at its fourteenth session, ACC/SWR assigned focal points for each of the key programme areas identified in chapter 18 of Agenda 21 (see para. 13 above). It was agreed that the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs would act as focal point for integrated water resources development and management; UNESCO and WMO for water resources assessment; WHO for protection of water resources, water quality and aquatic ecosystems and for drinking-water supply and sanitation; UN-Habitat for water and sustainable urban development; FAO for water for sustainable food production and rural development; and WMO for impacts of climate change on water resources. With regard to cross-cutting issues, it was agreed that INSTRAW, UNICEF and UNESCO would act as focal points for women's communication, education and research, respectively. In recent years, though, UNDP has actually been taking the main role on gender issues.

B. METHODOLOGY

25. Based on the review of the aforementioned setting, and to better serve the end-beneficiaries as defined in paragraph 2 of the introduction, special attention was given in the selection of the case studies for the report to the three programme areas where the role of local communities is strongly emphasized at the level of the objectives and actively sought in the activities recommended in these areas. These include: integrated water resources development and management; drinking-water supply and sanitation; and water for sustainable food production and rural development.

26. For this purpose, ACC/SWR focal points for these areas, namely the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, WHO and FAO, respectively, were requested to propose two or three projects executed by each of them in the field of water resources that could be used as case studies for the purposes of the present report and to provide appropriate documentation on each proposed project. Similar requests were also addressed to other ACC/SWR focal points, namely UNICEF (largely involved in the key programme area of Water Supply and Sanitation (WSS)), UNESCO and WMO, given the important nature and level of their activities in the field of water resources. A comprehensive list of these organizations' projects for the last five years was also requested.

27. The criteria given to the United Nations organizations to guide them in their proposals and to serve the purposes of the report were as follow: a participatory approach by the targeted end-beneficiaries (population/ local communities/ farmers, etc.) constitutes an important component of the project; the project ended three to five years ago or has been ongoing for three to five years in order to allow a reasonable assessment, either of the sustainability of the ended project or of the current participatory activities and of their impact on the end-beneficiaries for the ongoing project; the project is preferably part of an overall United Nations programme in the concerned country, or executed jointly with other United Nations organizations.

28. A desk review was conducted for the proposed projects, and three projects were selected as case studies where technical assistance is provided by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (the case in Madagascar, executed as a component of a UNDP programme for poverty reduction, where several United Nations organizations are involved with other components in the same region), FAO and UNICEF (both proposing projects in the same regions in Zambia, and thus largely targeting the same communities).

29. Field trips were conducted to several sites of the selected projects where meetings took place with the targeted communities, in addition to the meetings with officials from the United Nations organizations, as well as the national and local authorities. Meetings were also held with relevant officials at the headquarters of several United Nations organizations, including with the representatives of those organizations on ACC/SWR. In addition, part of the discussions of ACC/SWR during its twenty-second session (WMO, Geneva, September 2001) was followed during the process of preparation of this report.

30. It should be emphasized, though, that the case studies were not selected for their own technical

evaluation but rather to serve the objective of the report by providing entry points to review, at the field level, the activities and performance of the United Nations organizations which provide technical assistance to water-related projects, including the existing degree of coordination/ collaboration among the organizations at that level and the extent to which synergies and complementarities are effectively sought in their operational interventions for the benefits of the targeted communities.

II. THE ACC SUBCOMMITTEE ON WATER RESOURCES AND THE OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES: CHALLENGES AND LIMITATIONS

A. ACC/SWR AND OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES

31. Among the main functions entrusted to ACC/SWR (see para. 23 above) is the enhancement of coordination of country-level activities by the organizations and bodies of the United Nations system concerning the application of integrated approaches to the development, management and use of water resources. On several occasions, Member States and their expert bodies have invited ACC/SWR to activate this function.

32. In its report on its sixth session, in 1998, CSD (see decision 6/1 on strategic approaches to freshwater management, para. 20/c) invited ACC/SWR, as task manager for chapter 18 of Agenda 21, to enhance coordination within the United Nations system and to accelerate the implementation of chapter 18 by considering action, inter alia: (a) to identify gaps or inconsistencies in the implementation of programmes of its constituent organizations by assessing the main features and effectiveness of the implementation of those activities and ensure that the mainstreaming of gender perspectives is appropriately included; (b) to increase efficiency in programme delivery and possibilities for joint programming; and (c) to explore the potential of cooperative arrangements and, where appropriate, take into account experience gained from existing programmes in the United Nations system.

33. In an attempt to identify how best to meet the tasks required at the sixth session of CSD, ACC/SWR sought the services of a consultant.[19] Based on the consultant's proposals, the Subcommittee, at a special session held in The Hague on 23 March 2000, made a number of decisions to improve its working methods and procedures.[20] However, many of the substantive issues and problems raised by the consultant in the report, as well as many of the recommendations that have a bearing on the proper functioning of the Subcommittee, including the issues of coordination and collaboration between its members and its capacity to conduct its entrusted functions, were not addressed in depth or acted upon by the members of the Subcommittee.

34. The Committee on Energy and Natural Resources for Development (CENRD) recommended in the report on its second session held in August 2000 that ACC/SWR might aim towards better inter-agency coordination at the country and regional levels for rationalization of project implementation (decision 2/3; E/2000/32–E/C.14/2000/11).[21] Long before, in 1994, in the report on its second session, CSD invited ACC/SWR to initiate model projects, to be carried out by relevant agencies, in order to examine and exemplify the feasibility of water-saving strategies in water-intensive agricultural, industrial, urban and domestic sectors (E/1994/33/Rev.1-E/CN.17/1994/20/Rev.1, para. 138), an invitation that was never taken up by ACC/SWR.

B. CHALLENGES AND LIMITATIONS, UPSTREAM VERSUS DOWNSTREAM: THE GAP

35. The review of ACC/SWR conducted in the course of preparing this report, in particular in relation to its operational function, as well as to the context of its work and the policies pursued by some of its members as they relate to the operational activities, revealed several findings. Many were confirmed and complemented during the field trips, as follows.

36. In general, a gap exists between the policy setting, the coordination and the consensus achieved at the conceptual level between the secretariats of the various United Nations organizations involved in the area of water resources within ACC/SWR, on the one hand, and

[19] "Review of the ACC Subcommittee on Water Resources", note by the Secretary-General to the eighth session of CSD (E/CN.17/2000/18). It should be noted that the note by the Secretary-General was mainly a brief synopsis of the consultant's report and did not reflect in depth the issues raised and recommendations contained in that report.

[20] See ACC/2000/18.

[21] In its resolution 2001/36 of 26 July 2001, the Economic and Social Council decided to transmit the report of CENRD (E/2000/32) to CSD.

the implementation of these policies through systematic mechanisms and coordinated activities at the country level, on the other. In other words, the actual gap between high-level promising decisions and agreements and real performances in the field remains unacceptably large.

37. For example, while focal points among the United Nations organizations are clearly assigned within ACC/SWR for each of the key areas identified in chapter 18 of Agenda 21 and which are based, in principle, on the comparative advantage of each United Nations organization and its leading role in the key selected area,[22] this arrangement is not systematically considered or adhered to for the provision of technical assistance to, or the execution of, United Nations water projects at the country level.

38. The lack of a systematic division of labour at the operational level among the United Nations organizations members of ACC/SWR is often attributed to the competition for resources and their increasing scarcity, given the decline in funding from UNDP which led many United Nations agencies to seek funding directly from other sources, in particular bilateral donors. However, instead of attempting to draw on the comparative advantage and expertise of other United Nations agencies to increase the efficiency of the system interventions and to meet the challenge of declining resources, most organizations seem to have opted for a policy of "self-containment", striving to achieve self-sufficiency within themselves instead of drawing on or sharing resources within the system. In some cases, though, the donor policies or conditions do not foster such cooperation and sharing of resources within the United Nations system.

39. The absence of an institutional arrangement at the country level encompassing the United Nations organizations active in the water sector in that country which could act as an operational mechanism for coordination and collaboration (an operational arm of ACC/SWR at the country level), and as an interlocutor for the donors in the country, contributes to this gap.

40. In principle, each organization within ACC/SWR tries to incorporate the policy issues raised and agreed upon within the meetings of ACC/SWR, for example gender issues. However, this is done on an individual basis and with various approaches, and the results of such meetings are not systematically communicated to the country level for consideration or feedback.

41. Consistent with this is a lack of a mechanism within ACC/SWR to promote projects and advocate wider inter-agency participation in projects executed by one or more of its members, especially if the programmes or projects do not emanate from the Subcommittee itself.[23] Although in the context of improving the working methods of ACC/SWR, some members distribute brief papers or announce a few of their latest programmes, this activity hardly exceeds the exchange of information phase.

42. No single database exists for water projects executed by the United Nations organizations. The compendium of UNDP projects does not provide a real picture of today's United Nations system water projects nor information about their nature and their geographical placements, because of the declining funding role of UNDP, the outdated information in its compendium[24] and the focus in its project presentations on budgetary and funding considerations. While many separate databases exist for individual organizations, the dispersion of available data, and the fact that some databases are more developed and up to date than others, make it difficult to trace United Nations water projects across the system or to rely very much on the posted information.[25] Indeed, tracing relevant United Nations water-related projects to be selected as case studies for this report was one of the difficulties and limitations encountered during its preparation. The absence of a "one-stop" reliable database limits the transparency and the potential for better coordination/collaboration in the interventions of the United Nations organizations at the country level; various United

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[22] See paragraph 24 above.

[23] In the report on its twenty-first session (ACC/2000/18, para.27), ACC/SWR agreed that it should not execute projects; instead, it should promote/oversee projects emanating from Subcommittee decisions for joint programmes by all its members or groups of them, as appropriate.

[24] The last UNDP compendium available at the end of 2001 was the 1999 compendium.

[25] In addition to individual databases for most of the specialized agencies, IAEA and the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, some databases exist at the regional levels as well (see footnote 34 below, for example).

Nations organizations and other donors could take into account the existence of a particular United Nations project in a certain area in planning for their own future interventions at the country or regional level, and in the search for synergies and complementarities.[26]

43. It was noted that the representatives of some agencies at the meetings of ACC/SWR, while having strong expertise in the area of water resources, are largely responsible for and focused on the normative and analytical aspects within their organizations, and are not involved in the operational aspects conducted at the field level, or lack feedback from the operational level.[27]

44. This situation contributes in some cases to the existing gap between the decisions taken at the ACC/SWR meetings and their actual implementation. For instance, at the twenty-first session of ACC/SWR, UNDP introduced an issue paper on gender and integrated water resources management. As a follow-up to its discussion on gender issues, the Subcommittee decided to include the gender dimension in all its discussions and decisions.[28] At its twenty-second session, ACC/SWR could not follow-up on this decision as the representatives failed to come up with specific proposals to concretize the decision.

45. While several United Nations organizations developed guidelines covering some of their activities in the water sector (for example the FAO irrigation guidelines), and while joint efforts between a few United Nations organizations were made at the beginning of the 1980s to produce guidelines based on intersectoral and inter-agency collaboration,[29] there is an absence of common and comprehensive guidelines for the United Nations system organizations that would guide the United Nations agencies in their implementation of TCP in the field of water resources, take into account to the extent possible intersectoral aspects, and ensure, for example through specific checklists, inter alia that the objectives and activities adopted in Agenda 21, including those with regard to the involvement of local communities, are taken into account at the field level.[30]

46. The limited capacity of the secretariat of ACC/SWR has been noted (it is assumed on a part-time and voluntary basis by the Chief of Water, Natural Resources and SIDS Branch/DSD/DESA, and one assistant). This limited capacity resulted in the de facto putting aside of some of the main functions expected to be assumed by ACC/SWR according to its terms of reference, including its entrusted function to enhance the coordination of country-level activities by the organizations and bodies of the United Nations system concerning the application of integrated approaches to the development, management and use of water resources. It can also largely explain the inadequate responses from ACC/SWR to some of the requests of the States Members of CSD or their expert bodies,[31] and its inability to establish and

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[26] In a report by the Secretary-General to the Economic and Social Council in 1997 on "Coordination of the policies and activities of the specialized agencies and other bodies of the United Nations system" in the area of freshwater, including clean and safe water supply and sanitation, the Secretary-General noted that the lack of comprehensive information concerning activities of the organizations of the United Nations system, particularly at the country level, has hampered closer cooperation among organizations and increased efforts to overcome that problem are needed. In this context, he indicated that the need to establish a distributed database system linked to an Internet home page on United Nations water activities had been recognized by ACC/SWR.

[27] For instance, at the last three sessions of ACC/SWR, the representative of UNDP, who was the only expert in UNDP responsible for water policy issues, was not involved in any way in following the UNDP projects conducted totally at the country level, under the overall decentralization policy adopted by UNDP, and thus did not have any feedback from the field.

[28] See ACC/2000/18, paras. 22 and 24.

[29] A joint WHO/FAO/UNEP Panel of Experts on Environmental Management for Vector Control (PEEM) was established in 1981. The Panel's objective was to create an institutional framework for effective inter-agency and intersectoral collaboration, with a view to promoting the extended use of environmental management measures for disease vector control in development projects. The Panel produced a series of guidelines and manuals aiming to give technical guidance to a multidisciplinary audience (see for exapmle M. Tiffen, 1991, Guidelines for the Incorporation of Health Safeguards into Irrigation Projects through Intersectoral Cooperation, PEEM Guidelines Series 1, document WHO/CWS/91.2, World Health Organization, Geneva).

[30] The European Commission, for example, has a set of guidelines for water resources development cooperation that include checklists for the preparation of programmes and projects, sector reviews, policy studies and country studies for different phases of the project cycle. The checklists are subdivided according to focus areas and guiding principles. (See "Towards sustainable water resources management: a strategic approach", Guidelines for water resources development cooperation, European Commission, September 1998).

[31] See paras. 32–34 above for example.

follow a linkage between ACC/SWR upstream decisions and the downstream operational activities at the county level.[32] Indeed, several United Nations officials from the United Nations organizations members of the Subcommittee emphasized that it was unrealistic to expect more from the secretariat given its limited resources and technical capacity.

47. Finally, a number of officials emphasized the need to strengthen the role of the regional commissions in the design, coordination and implementation of the programmes/projects needed to fulfil the mandate of ACC/SWR, especially since coordination at the regional level is closer to countries and end-beneficiaries.[33] Those officials suggested a more effective linking role for the regional commissions between the global and country levels and highlighted the challenge for ACC/SWR to ensure that the activities undertaken by the regional commissions or the regional inter-agency water bodies, and the products from these bodies, are integrated in the regular programmes of the members of the regional inter-agency bodies that belong to the same agencies as ACC/SWR.[34]

[32] The issue of the limited resources of ACC/SWR was also highlighted by the consultant who reviewed the working methods of the Subcommittee. The members of ACC/SWR, at their twenty-first session in 2000, noted that adequate resources should be allocated to the secretariat with a view to facilitating the full implementation of the galvanizing role it should assume when issues need urgent action by all or some of its members. The members also recommended that the Subcommittee agencies should consider what kind of support they could extend to the secretariat in relation to specific programmes and projects (ACC/2000/18, para. 28).

[33] It is worth noting that, on several occasions, the importance of the regional commissions and of their coordinating and cooperation activities was emphasized and appreciated by the members of ACC/SWR (see, for example, ACC/2000/18, para. 33). In this context, some members proposed that the Subcommittee could act as a coordinated group to endorse and support the formulation of regional and interregional large-scale project proposals on groundwater management, (ibid., para. 36).

[34] For example, in the African context, ACC/SWR was replicated in the 1990s in the form of the Inter-agency Group for Water in Africa (IGWA) with ECA providing the secretariat. In 2000, IGWA decided, among others, to develop a biannual African Water Development Report and to set up an African water information clearing house which will include a "one-stop" shop web-site. Within the Asian and Pacific region (ESCAP region), and following the dissolution of the ESCAP/UNEP Inter-agency Task Force on Water for Asia and the Pacific in December 2001, it was agreed that relevant water issues should be incorporated into the Thematic Working Group on Environment and Development. Among the activities undertaken by the Working Group is a database of projects on freshwater resources and water-related issues at the regional, sub-regional and national levels.

III. CASE STUDIES

48. As explained in paragraph 28 of the methodology, the selection of the case studies for the report was guided by the proposals submitted by the relevant United Nations organizations based on certain criteria communicated to them, and given the unavailability of a broader pool of selection in the absence of a comprehensive database for the projects executed by the United Nations organizations in the field of water resources, as mentioned in paragraph 42 above.

49. In addition, and as emphasized in paragraph 30 above, the case studies were not selected for their own technical evaluation but rather to help achieve the objective of the report by serving as entry points to review, at the field level, the activities and performance of the United Nations organizations providing technical assistance to water-related projects. Therefore, the findings focus on and highlight issues that have a bearing on policies rather than on the technical performance of the selected cases. A general sense of the latter, however, can be obtained through the description of the selected case studies and their results, as contained in the first and second parts of this chapter.

50. The third part of this chapter elaborates the general findings drawn by the Inspector from his review of the case studies and the anecdotal and other evidence gathered by him, including through the meetings with and interviews of the various relevant officials at the headquarters and in the field, and the discussions with the local authorities and communities at the visited project sites. A last fourth part of this chapter contains brief programme and project-related policy findings that it was thought would be useful to highlight and share for the purposes of the report.

A. ZAMBIA

1. The national setting

51. Zambia covers an area of 752,614 square kilometres. Despite considerable efforts by its Government to improve coverage of water supply and sanitation to the almost 10 million people, 52% of its rural population remain without access to clean water (down from 72% with no access in 1990, and compared with 88% coverage in its urban areas).[35] Inadequate access to safe drinking water and poor sanitation and hygiene practices increase the exposure of people to illness and death (in 1992, a cholera epidemic claimed more than 1,090 lives), and in rural areas it is estimated that millions of hours are lost each year on water collection from distance sources.[36]

52. The Government launched water sector reforms beginning in 1993. The main milestones of the sectoral reforms include: formulation and adoption of a national water policy in 1994; adoption of the Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Education (WASHE) strategy (the national WASHE concept was formally launched in 1996); development and adoption of the strategy for the rural and peri-urban areas in 1997; development of the community WSS strategy and peri-urban WSS strategy; and development of a gender strategy for mainstreaming gender in the water and sanitation sector.[37]

53. In the current institutional structure, various ministries and agencies of Government have water resources management responsibilities. The Department of Water Affairs in the Ministry of Energy and Water Development has the lead role. The Ministry of Local Government and Housing has had since 1997 (in the context of the sectoral reforms) full responsibility for the provision of domestic and municipal water and sanitation. The Ministry of the Environment and the Environmental Council of Zambia are concerned with water-related environmental aspects.[38]

54. Basic water rights are laid out in the Constitution of Zambia. The Water Act of 1948 is the primary water legislation, together with the Water Supply and Sanitation Act of 1997. The National Water Policy adopted in 1994 ensures that Rural Water Supply and Sanitation (RWSS)

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[35] The WHO and UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme for Water Supply and Sanitation; "Global Water Supply and Sanitation Assessment, 2000 Report".

[36] "WASHE Programme Document for Community Based Support within the Reform Support Unit", Government of Zambia, 1997.

[37] "National Strategy for Mainstreaming Gender in Water and Sanitation Sector", Government of Zambia, 2001.

[38] "Water Resources Action Programme: Institutional and Legal Framework for Water Resources Management", Government of Zambia, November 2000.

programmes are community based through: the formation of water committees for effective coordination, the management and mobilization of resources; the integration of community education, motivation, health and hygiene and water awareness programmes in the development, operation and maintenance of RWSS programmes; and the development of standardized educational materials and training of trainers.[39]

2. The United Nations system setting

55. The United Nations Country Team (UNCT) in Zambia comprises 13 resident agencies, subdivided into funds, programmes and specialized agencies. According to UNDAF for Zambia, the agencies considered as funds include UNICEF, UNAIDS and UNFPA. Agencies considered as programmes are UNDP, ECA, WFP and UNHCR. Specialized agencies include the World Bank, ILO, IMF, FAO, UNIDO[40] and WHO. Zambia has been a recipient of United Nations technical assistance since its independence in 1964.[41]

56. CCA was completed in December 2000. The first UNDAF for Zambia was completed at the end of 2001 and covers the period 2002 – 2006. This period mainly covers the five-year programming cycles of the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) agencies (including UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA and WFP) whose programmes have to be harmonized with effect from 2002. Non-UNDG resident agencies operating on the basis of different planning cycles and non-resident United Nations agencies will have to align their assistance to the extent possible.[42]

57. Three strategic areas of intervention are targeted: employment; social services and governance.[43] Food production/security, health and nutrition, and civil society empowerment are among specific areas of action identified respectively in relation to the three strategic targeted areas.[44]

3. The WASHE programme (UNICEF)

(a) UNICEF setting

58. Mandated to assist countries in fulfilling the basic needs of children, including the supply of safe water and sanitation, UNICEF has a large portfolio of water and environment, as well as sanitation and hygiene education projects which are currently carried out in some 81 countries through regional and field offices and in cooperation with multilateral agencies, Governments and non-governmental organizations. In 1999, UNICEF expenditure for water supply, environment, sanitation and hygiene education programmes amounted to an estimated US$ 70 million.[45] In 1990, WHO and UNICEF agreed on a Joint Monitoring Programme for Water Supply and Sanitation intended for capacity-building in information systems at the country level. UNICEF also signed a collaborative agreement with the World Bank on water supply and sanitation in Africa.

59. In Zambia, UNICEF supported with other donors the water sector reforms launched by the Government. WASHE is one of the four UNICEF/Government of Zambia programmes of cooperation in the five-year programme period 1997-2001 to be renewed for the period 2002-2006. The estimated total resources required for the programme in the period 2002-2006 are almost US$ 14 million, including US$ 3.6 million of regular resources.[46]

(b) WASHE objectives

60. WASHE supports the National Water and Sanitation Programme which aims at improving the quality of life through increasing the availability of safe and sustainable water supplies and sanitation facilities in rural and peri-urban areas. In pursuing these national goals, the

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[39] "National Water Policy", Government of Zambia, November 1994.

[40] UNIDO field office in Zambia was later closed at the end of June 2001. Since then, Zambia has been covered by UNIDO regional office in Zimbabwe.

[41] "United Nations Development Assistance Framework for Zambia UNDAF, 2002 – 2006".

[42] Ibid.

[43] Ibid. Three cross-cutting issues had been also identified: HIV/AIDS, gender, and regional integration.

[44] Ibid.

[45] "Technical cooperation activities of the United Nations system in the field of water resources", Report of the Secretary-General to CENRD at its second session (E/C.14/2000/10, para. 10).

[46] See the UNICEF country programme recommendation for Zambia (E/ICEF/2001/P/L.9/Add.1) presented to the UNICEF Executive Board at its second regular session (December 2001). The other three programmes are: primary health care and nutrition; basic education; and child protection.

programme seeks to contribute to the reduction in morbidity and mortality rates due to diseases associated with inadequate water supplies and poor sanitation and hygiene practices, and to reduce time and energy expenditure, especially by women and young girls, on the collection of water.

(c) Community participation and the programme activities

61. The community-based approaches are implemented through the establishment of WASHE committees at the district (D-WASHE) and village (V-WASHE) levels.[47] The D-WASHE committees are formed by the local government under the District Development and Coordination Committees. Each committee has six core members who are the district heads of the Departments from the Ministries of Local Government and Housing; Education; Community Development and Social Services; Health; Energy and Water Development (through the Department of Water Affairs); and Agriculture, Food and Fisheries. NGOs actively working in the districts also act as members of the D-WASHE committees.

62. The establishment of a D-WASHE committee entails training its members through different levels. National-level guidelines, specifications, standards and series of WASHE manuals were developed and produced by the national authority and are used by the national WASHE and Coordinating Team[48] in its training programmes for D-WASHE committees. The aim is to operationalize the District committees by giving their members the skill and the ability either to coordinate, implement, supervise or monitor WASHE projects in the District.

63. The V-WASHE committees are composed, after a process of wide consultations, of members of the targeted villages/communities (usually 10 members, five main members and their deputies) where the water point (wells or borehole) will be established. They are provided with different training skills such as the installation and repair of hand pumps, making concrete liners, construction of latrines, etc. They are also given different types of moulds and tool sets, such as mason's kits and special tools for hand-pumps. Communities are encouraged to collect user fees (each V-WASHE comprises a treasurer and a deputy) and guided on how to use them. The communities are also informed and trained on safe sanitation and hygiene practices, including through some animation techniques, the objective being to ensure sustainability of the water points and adequate autonomy for the communities in managing and maintaining them.

(d) Results

64. The WASHE concept, which was supported by UNICEF initially in 10 districts in the Southern and Eastern Provinces,[49] has been extended nationally to 62 of Zambia's 72 districts. Following the national strategy, the 13 UNICEF-supported WASHE districts prepared their own district sanitation strategies in 2000. Since 1997, through the UNICEF-supported programme and other donor-assisted programmes, the water coverage in two supported provinces, based on district surveys carried out in 2000, has increased from 34% and 47% to 42% and 53%, respectively. Through UNICEF's support of community-level capacity-building training on the proper use and maintenance of WASHE facilities, a recent survey in 10 districts indicated that about 90% of hand-pump facilities are working properly. An estimated 22,000 households have built family latrines and started to use them (up from 200 in 1997). About 50% of the latrines are kept clean and are used properly. About 43% of people wash their hands at essential times, 40% use their dish racks and 77% store drinking water safely.[50]

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[47] The programme for establishing these committees started in the western part of the country with support from a bilateral donor. Having recognized the success of such an approach, the Government decided to introduce it nationwide.

[48] To promote WASHE countrywide, a National WASHE and Coordinating Team was established in 1996. The team consists of multidisciplinary facilitators specializing in engineering, health, water, sociology and graphic designing; "Understanding the WASHE Concept/Strategy", Manual 1, Government of Zambia, 1998.

[49] These districts, initially supported by UNICEF in 1997, were the worst affected by drought. They include five districts in the Southern Province (Mazabuka, Monze, Choma, Sinazongwe, Kalomo) and five districts in the Eastern Province (Nyimba, Katete, Petauke, Chipata and Chadiza).

[50] See note 46 above.

4. The SIWUP[51] and WIN[52] programmes (FAO technical assistance)

FAO setting

65. FAO provides technical assistance in the field of water resources in several ways. One of the key instruments for this is the Technical Cooperation Programme managed by the Technical Cooperation Department, through which FAO competences in water resources are made readily available to its member countries. Another channel for providing this technical assistance is the FAO Special Programme for Food Security (SPFS) launched in 1994 and endorsed by the World Food Summit held in November 1996. SPFS mainly works with farmers and other stakeholders to identify and resolve constraints to food production and to demonstrate ways of increasing production. In drought-prone areas, limited access to water is often a major constraint to improving food production, making small-scale irrigation, water harvesting and water development technologies top priorities for SPFS. The programme is currently operational in 69 countries and under formulation in 18 others (its focus is on low-income, food-deficit countries).

66. Through its regular programme, FAO is able to finance a core of technical staff in water resource development and management (over 20 posts) shared between headquarters (12) and its regional offices (9), which provide, among other things, technical assistance to water-related projects. A redistribution of these posts took place recently in line with the decentralization policy endorsed by FAO governing bodies. FAO technical assistance to member countries is financed through its own resources (the Technical Cooperation Programme mentioned above) or through funding from organizations like the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the World Bank and IAEA.

67. FAO technical capacity in water is further strengthened through the International Programme for Technology and Research in Irrigation and Drainage (IPTRID), an internationally funded, independent programme hosted and managed by FAO.[53] The IPTRID secretariat is located within the Water Resources Development and Management Service of the Land and Water Development Division. The "core programme" of IPTRID focuses on four priority areas (1998-2001): knowledge synthesis; national research and development strategies and programmes; national capacity-building; networking and information dissemination. The programme also has a thematic and regional focus as follows: technologies for smallholder irrigation development (Sub-Saharan Africa); water conservation technologies (Mediterranean basin countries); and drainage and sustainability of irrigation (Asia, Near East and North Africa). IPTRID is not involved in technical assistance projects, but assists the Water Resources Development and Management Service in the implementation of certain field projects.

68. In Zambia, the water control component of SPFS was initiated in 1996 with 15 pilot sites in three provinces, introducing appropriate irrigation techniques for smallholder farmers in irrigated vegetable gardens. In particular, the introduction of the treadle pump and the improvement of traditional well-drilling techniques have improved availability of water for irrigation and allowed a substantial increase in the area under vegetables. The programme was further expanded under the IFAD-supported SIWUP[54] and in 1999, the programme was operational in over 90 locations in five provinces. The main national partner and implementing institution for FAO technical assistance projects in Zambia is the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries.

4.1 The SIWUP programme

(a) Introduction

69. SIWUP was initiated in 1995 under the Agriculture Sector Investment Programme (ASIP) irrigation sub-programme. Its original costs were estimated at US$ 11.2 million with contributions from the Government of Zambia and beneficiaries (US$ 3.6 million), IFAD (US$ 6.4 million) and the International Development Association (IDA) (US$ 1.2 million). Supervision of the SIWUP project was originally provided by the World Bank. In December 1998, IFAD decided to

[51] Small-holder Irrigation and Water Use Programme; an IFAD-funded programme, operated by UNOPS.

[52] Women, Irrigation and Nutrition; an UNFIP-funded programme operated by FAO in three countries.

[53] International Programme for Technology and Research in Irrigation and Drainage. Between 1992 and mid-1998, IPTRID was located at the World Bank.

[54] WIN Project Document, 1999.

replace the World Bank with UNOPS as cooperating institution.[55] FAO technical assistance was provided from 1998 until 2000. The SIWUP programme effectively started in late 1996 at a slow pace, but it gained momentum by 1998 with the completion of the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries restructuring programme under ASIP and the recruitment of the FAO irrigation adviser under the FAO technical assistance programme in December 1997. The completion date for SIWUP was originally set for April 2000, but was extended to 30 June 2002 (project closing date extended to 31 December 2002).

(b) Objectives

70. SIWUP, as part of the ASIP, is guided by the overall country policy on agriculture, which aims at ensuring national food security through dependable annual production and adequate supplies of basic food stuffs. Its main objectives therefore are: to promote economically sustainable irrigation systems; to expand the area under irrigated agriculture and contribute to increased crop production; and to improve income generation among irrigation farmers.

(c) Community participation and programme activities

71. SIWUP has four main areas covering the following components: reinforcement of informal irrigation, including the rehabilitation and construction of small dams and the promotion of low-cost irrigation technologies (treadle pump techniques); transfer of government schemes; community development; and institutional strengthening. Community participation is sought in all areas including through training of retailers of irrigation equipment and farmers on installation and maintenance of treadle pumps (informal irrigation component); formation of water users farmers associations (transfer of government schemes); community mobilization and formation of dam management committees (community development component); and training at various levels (national, provincial and camp levels for farmers) through the institutional strengthening component.

(d) Results

72. The SIWUP component on rehabilitation and construction of small dams was hampered by serious delays. By the end of 2000, only three dams had been rehabilitated and a single new dam was still under construction in 2001. This is far from the ambitious target stated in the project document of over 350 dams to be rehabilitated before project completion, or even the target set in June 1998 reflected in a World Bank/IDA aide mémoire to rehabilitate 12 dams and construct 7 new dams by the end of 1998. The promotion of small-holder irrigation technologies proved more successful and low-cost irrigation technologies were introduced under FAO technical assistance, in close cooperation with the International Development Enterprise, an international non-governmental organization. Through a participatory training and extension programme, the irrigation technologies were demonstrated to small-holder farmers. Staff training was organized at provincial and district levels and farmer training programmes took place at over 100 sites. In 2000, over 2,000 farmers participated in these programmes, with an average female participation of 47%.[56] The training programme was discontinued after termination of FAO technical assistance in 2001.

73. A UNOPS supervision mission in February/March 2001 recommended the establishment of closer linkages between the technical, socio-economic and sociological aspects of the project. It noted that the dam programme under SIWUP appeared to be rather technocratic as opposed to a community-driven project. The dams were constructed or rehabilitated using contractors with heavy plant and with fairly minimal community involvement. The mission noted that the lack of community development remained a major weakness, and that the culture of dependency at community level was easy to see.[57] FAO addressed some of these deficiencies through its SIWUP farmers training programme and the WIN project.

[55] The cooperating institution provides overall management of the project on behalf of IFAD.

[56] SIWUP, "Report on the second farmer training programme, 2000", Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries, February 2001.

[57] UNOPS supervision report, 19/2 – 2/3/2001.

4.2. The WIN project

(a) Introduction

74. The project's formal title is "Empowerment of Women in Irrigation and Water Resources Management for Improved Household Food Security, Nutrition and Health". It is referred to as the WIN project, the acronym for Women, Irrigation and Nutrition. The project is funded by UNFIP with a total budget of US$ 1.7 million over three years starting in 2000 in three countries.

75. FAO is responsible for the technical execution of the project, which is closely linked to the FAO Special Programme for Food Security (SPSF). WIN was initiated in three countries, Zambia, Cambodia and Nepal, where SPSF has been operational for some years, focusing on irrigation development for small-holder farmers and introducing appropriate technologies for increased irrigated food production for farming communities and water users associations. WIN became operational in Zambia in March 2000 with the mission of the Chief Technical Adviser of the project.

(b) Objectives

76. The overall objective of WIN is to ensure the sustainability of irrigation development and its positive impact on the food security and nutrition of the local population. It is a contribution to the empowerment of women in the management of irrigation systems and access to water resources, and in diversifying and intensifying crop production for improved household food security, nutrition and health.

77. The project's specific aims are: to demonstrate in 36 pilot locations the benefits of women's empowerment, including by increasing women's capacity to participate in and influence irrigation and water resources management and increase their access to productive resources; to develop guidelines and procedures in support of this; to create a local capacity in the three countries to further disseminate and expand the experiences and results into their respective national action plans and programmes.

(c) Community participation and activities

78. Training and capacity-building of district teams and village groups form the central part of the project activity. The training of women farmers is a core field activity in the project's design, to be implemented within the framework of the participatory farmers' extension programme, introduced under SPFS and SIWUP. Project activities can be grouped in three categories: (i) increased participation of women in ongoing water control activities (including through enhancing women's participation in water users' associations and enhancing their skills in financial and organizational management); (ii) intensification and diversification of food production (including through introducing improved technologies and techniques to women farmers and providing them with access to credit arrangements to enable necessary inputs and investments); (iii) improved household nutrition, food security and health (including through introducing appropriate crop types and production techniques, as well as health and hygiene methods).

79. In Zambia, six sites were selected in three provinces (Southern, Lusaka and Luapula), four of which (in Southern and Lusaka Provinces) are linked to SIWUP. FAO established partnerships with two non-governmental organizations active in the selected sites to promote partnerships in community development and irrigation techniques.

(d) Results

80. The WIN project activities in Zambia have only recently become fully operational and during the preparation process of the report, no concrete information was available to the Inspector regarding the results of the project. However, the visit by the Inspector to the SIWUP/WIN project sites in the Southern Province revealed a few preliminary findings, as reflected in paragraph 110 below, with regard to the effect of the timing of the introduction and application of the participatory approaches and techniques within a project cycle, and the necessity of including such approaches in the design and planning phase of a project in order to ensure positive participatory results.

B. MADAGASCAR

1. The national setting

81. Madagascar covers an area of 594,180 square kilometres. The figures for 2000 show that 71.3 % of its 15.5 million people live below the poverty line, that 83% of the rural population have no access to clean water and that 75 % are deprived from basic sanitation services (versus 17% and

38%, respectively, of the urban population).[58] Water-related diseases rank third in the mortality and morbidity rates, with diarrhoea being the first disease in affecting children under five years old who also suffer, along with pregnant and breast-feeding women, from malnutrition. During 1999/2000, a cholera epidemic claimed about 2,000 lives.[59]

82. In 1991, an evaluation study for the water sector was conducted in the context of the preparation of a Sector Strategy and Plan of Action Paper (SSPA). The study revealed many characteristics including: a non-integrated management of water resources; multiplicity of actors in the sector with insufficient coordinating capacity; insufficient involvement on the part of communities and actors other than the State in the sector. Based on this evaluation, the Government elaborated and adopted in 1995 the SSPA for water and sanitation, followed in 1998 by a Policy Declaration for the water sector, which paved the way to the enactment of the Water Code in January 1999.

83. The Water Code created the National Authority for Water and Sanitation, known by its French acronym ANDEA, in order to ensure the integrated management of water resources and the rational development of the water and sanitation sector.[60] ANDEA is assigned as the unique interlocutor for all issues related to water resources. The Water Code also confirms and further defines the principles that guide the government actions in the water sector, previously announced in SSPA and the Policy Declaration, including the liberalization of the sector, the principle of non-gratuity of water, and the polluter pays principle. Community involvement is also emphasized, including through its participation in financing its own local water installations and in maintaining them.[61]

2. The United Nations system setting

84. Madagascar was among 11 pilot countries where the UNDAF process was first applied in 1998 for the period 1998-2003. All United Nations funds and programmes (UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA, WFP, UNAIDS), as well as the specialized agencies (FAO, WHO, ILO, UNIDO) operating in Madagascar (as well as the National Commission for UNESCO) participated in the exercise. The World Bank and IMF were kept closely informed about the process and its evolution.

85. During the process of preparation of UNDAF, six sectoral commissions were established, among them a Commission on Water and Sanitation, to identify the main problems and develop a common strategy to address them. Around a common principal objective of promoting and contributing to the sustainable human development of the Malgache population, four sectoral and thematic objectives were identified by UNDAF aiming to contribute to: access to adequate and sufficient nutrition by the population; improving the quality of life of the population, notably through access to basic social services (including water); the development of employment and revenue-generating activities; the strengthening of institutional capacities, including the development of human resources and accountability of beneficiaries at all levels.[62]

86. Within this framework, UNDAF set a specific cooperation objective for the United Nations system to contribute to the increase of coverage of potable water and sanitation services in Madagascar by 25% and 14%, respectively.

87. In addition, water resources development was set as one of the high priority sectors to be covered by the IAEA technical cooperation programme in Madagascar, as part of the Country Programme Framework developed for Madagascar in 1995 for the period 1997-2000 and reaffirmed by the new Framework covering the next five years.[63] In this context, IAEA has been assisting Madagascar since 1998 to improve the understanding of groundwater hydrology.

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[58] "Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper", Republic of Madagascar, October 2001.

[59] Paper prepared by the Ministry of Energy and Mines in preparation of the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper, July 2001.

[60] In the course of the report preparation, studies were still undergoing by the end of 2000 to establish ANDEA and define its status within the Government overall structure.

[61] The Policy Declaration, though, states explicitly that in rural areas and certain zones, the totality of the economic cost cannot be borne by all the users, and the State should assume a contribution through the creation of a National Fund for Water and Sanitation to guarantee the fundamental right to all to access clean water.

[62] UNDAF, Republic of Madagascar, 1998.

[63] IAEA, though, did not participate in the UNDAF process in Madagascar.

3. The UNDP Programme for Poverty Reduction

88. In an attempt to ensure the coherence and efficiency of its interventions, UNDP largely focused its support through a Programme for Poverty Reduction (PPR) positioned within the framework of the national strategy to combat poverty elaborated by the Government of Madagascar. The Programme, launched in 1998, focuses its activities in two of the poorest provinces in Madagascar (Finarantsoa and Toliara) where 77 % and 87% of the population live, respectively, under the poverty line.

89. The Programme involves several United Nations entities in Madagascar (including FAO, the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, WHO, UN-Habitat, and ILO[64]) working as cooperating agencies entrusted, within their mandates and competence, with the execution of the five main components constituting the Programme: agriculture; fishing; water; health and education; habitat. As part of its intervention strategy, the Programme promotes the effective participation of the beneficiary actors, in particular the poor rural and urban population, including in the identification of actions to be taken, options to follow and services to be provided. It also focuses on strengthening the capacity of local authorities and developing active partnership with proximity actors (associations, non-governmental organizations, enterprises, etc).

4. The Water Component in the Grand Sud (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs execution)

(a) The United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs setting

90. United Nations technical cooperation in the field of water resources is mainly conducted through the Division for Sustainable Development (DSD) in the Department of Economic and Social Affairs. The Division formulates, implements and executes multidisciplinary programmes and projects dealing with key aspects of sustainable development (its areas of cooperation comprise: freshwater management, energy, infrastructure and land management; and mineral resources). Through its Water and Natural Resources Branch, the Division provides project execution and policy advisory services at national and regional levels in integrated water resources management. The principal objective of the Branch is to assist developing countries in enhancing their own capacity in integrated water resources management, particularly the operational aspects. The expertise of the Division can assist Governments in all aspects of water resources development and management including: diagnostic assessments of national and provincial water sectors; development of water policy and legislative frameworks; training, capacity-building and institutional strengthening for integrated water resources management; RWSS programmes; medium and long-term management strategies; assessments of water resource availability and use; hydro-environmental impact assessments; and hydro-geological and hydrological studies.

91. The United Nations TC activities were severely affected by the decline in funding to technical assistance from UNDP and the donor countries.[65] The United Nations capacity in the field of technical cooperation in general, and in the field of water in particular, had shrunk considerably over the last decade. The number of United Nations technical advisers shrunk by more than two thirds over this period, with only 26 remaining today in all areas. In the field of water, only three technical advisers remain to cover the whole United Nations activities in this field (down from nine in 1994).

92. The merging of United Nations TC activities within their relevant substantive divisions did not always lead to the desired interaction and synergies between the normative, analytical and operational activities. This was largely attributed to management issues, and the need to address and rectify this situation was acknowledged by officials of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs. A task force within the Department embarked recently on the elaboration of a new strategy for United Nations TC activities.

93. In Madagascar, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs is entrusted, as a cooperating agency, with the execution of the Water

[64] At a later stage, ILO did not continue within the framework of the Programme.

[65] UNDP capacity in the field of water was not only affected by the decline in funding, but also by the change of focus and priorities within UNDP. Only one person was in charge of all water policy issues at the UNDP Headquarters when the report was being prepared.

Component in the Grand Sud of the country, within the UNDP Programme for Poverty Reduction as briefly described in paragraphs 88-89 above. It also provides technical support for the establishment of ANDEA (see para. 83 above).

(b) Objectives of the Water Component within the UNDP-Programme for Poverty Reduction

94. Within the global objective of improving the quality of living of the targeted population, the Component's immediate objective is to provide sufficient information about the underground water resources available in the Grand Sud of Madagascar that could be mobilized in adequate and sustainable amounts through the appropriate supply systems. Hence, the main activity of the Component consists of elaborating a master plan for the integrated water resources management in the Grand Sud. Hydro-geological reconnaissance studies were conducted in three priority zones to ensure sustainability of the level of water resources. Based on the researches' results, and given the dire needs of the population in this region, the Component added to its objectives the operational target of executing and rehabilitating 150 water points (mainly boreholes equipped with manual water pumps).

(c) Community participation and activities

95. Community participation is achieved through an IEC approach aiming to involve the future beneficiaries of the water points during the whole of the intervention phases of the project (before, during and after the realization of the installation), with the objective of getting the villagers to be in charge of the management and maintenance of the water installations in place. This is done through a process of sensitization, animation, and the constitution of management committees for the water points.

96. As the cooperating agency for the Water Component, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs contributed actively, together with the national and provincial authorities, UNDP and UNICEF, to the holding of a regional IEC seminar in the Grand Sud (Toliara, October 2001). The objective of the seminar, which brought together most of the many actors (both from within and outside the United Nations system, including non-governmental organizations) involved in programmes and projects to provide potable water in the rural areas of the Grand Sud, was to review and compare the different IEC approaches used by the various actors in their water projects, with a view to elaborating a common approach for all the IEC-related aspects adapted to the conditions in the Grand Sud.

(d) Results

97. Within the context of the water master plan preparation, several studies have been completed, including a study on the water reserves in the Grand Sud of Madagascar. The validation of the water master plan is actively on course for presentation to the national authorities, to be used notably for planning purposes. Fourteen water boreholes have been realized, three of which were transformed from initially research boreholes to exploitation ones. A socio-anthropological study was also completed aiming for a better understanding of the socio-cultural context of the Grand Sud, thus allowing for the development and conduct of appropriate sensitization, animation, organization and education campaigns for the population.[66]

C. GENERAL FINDINGS

98. The two missions revealed the need for more action to foster cooperation and collaboration at the field level between the various United Nations agencies in general, and in the field of water resources in particular. The synergies and complementarities sought by the Member States of the United Nations through the operational interventions of organizations of the United Nations system, especially in the field of water-related projects, are far from being realized, or even explored, to maximize the benefits for the targeted communities.

99. Although in some cases the zones of intervention by the various United Nations agencies were close to each other, and thus the targeted communities were largely the same, very little, if any, exchange of information or experience about the region, the communities, or the nature of the intervention occurs between the agencies, not to mention the search for potential synergies and complementarities in the interventions.[67]

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[66] The 2000 Annual Evaluation Report focused on results of the UNDP Programme for Poverty Reduction.

[67] Op.cit., supra note 26. In his report the Secretary-General noted that "with the exception of instances where one

100. Often, different participatory approaches or IEC techniques are used in the same region, leading to incoherence in sensitizing the targeted communities. In other cases, different United Nations agencies have recourse to the same non-governmental organizations in place to do basically the same job with different approaches (depending on the organization's philosophy and approach), thus leading sometimes to confusion in the targeted communities and to duplication of efforts and use of the resources of the United Nations agencies involved. The IEC seminar held in the Grand Sud of Madagascar (see para. 96 above) represents a good first step - that should be enhanced and followed by other steps - in an effort to avoid such situations and to harmonize IEC techniques among the United Nations organizations and other actors targeting the same or similar communities through their technical assistance projects. Such seminars represent a good practice that could be replicated in other countries and in different regions of the same country with different target communities.

101. There is a big potential for synergies and complementarities among the United Nations agencies in water-related projects. While each agency stands to benefit from this, above all the targeted communities themselves stand to benefit. For instance, the quality of water provided by the wells or boreholes was a salient issue at most of the sites visited in Zambia and Madagascar. WHO has the potential and the know-how to assist in this area with simple techniques. These techniques are already being used in some zones of intervention by WHO in Madagascar without extending them, as appropriate, to the other zones of intervention by other United Nations agencies working in the same region, mainly because of simple lack of information and experience exchange. Moreover, with some additional inputs, for example from FAO whose experience and know-how are already being applied at separate nearby FAO project sites, the communities benefiting from the boreholes or wells executed by other agencies could take on more productive agricultural activities, or at least diversify their agricultural products for better and more balanced nutrition.

102. Another example where cooperation and coordination could optimize investments by the United Nations agencies for the ultimate benefit of the targeted population was found in the Grand Sud of Madagascar, which has limited rainfall and whose groundwater resources are largely unexplored. Substantial investments for water prospecting and major water supply development made by the Government and its development partners, including United Nations agencies, have not always produced the expected results, owing to the low productivity of wells and the salinization that was encountered. The rate of failure has recently been estimated at 30% on average, and reached 50% in some arid zones. For instance, a UNICEF drilling programme of 150 boreholes revealed that approximately 37% of the boreholes were too saline for human consumption or had poor water yield, and therefore were plugged and abandoned. The IAEA-sponsored project in Madagascar (see para. 87 above) has been helping to improve the understanding of groundwater hydrology, through the use of isotope techniques, in support of drilling programmes for rural water supply.[68] It aims to evaluate groundwater recharge areas and rates for a better sustainability of water points (wells or boreholes) to be drilled, and to investigate the distribution and origin of groundwater salinity in order to provide guidelines to locate suitable sites for drilling water points.[69]

103. In fact, in the case of Zambia, a map showing the operational zones of intervention of the various United Nations agencies does not even exist, thus making any coordination or exploration of points of synergy and complementarities at the field level extremely difficult.[70] On the other hand, a partial map exists (annex 1) showing the zones of

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organization provides direct support to another in the implementation of a given project or programme, activities and projects of various organizations are too often carried out without sufficient knowledge or consideration of those undertaken by others" (para.35).

[68] According to IAEA, isotope hydrology is an essential tool for national and supra-national water authorities which are preparing management plans and development strategies to respond to the systemic and comprehensive water resources challenges.

[69] Project results established that both low and high salinity groundwater are being actively recharged by rainfall. The higher salinity in groundwater most likely results from very old groundwater (millions of years old) trapped along ancient shear zones, rather than from seawater encroachment or excessive evaporation. The project has also fostered the creation of a multidisciplinary national working group to perform groundwater investigations using isotope techniques.

[70] The UNDP Resident Representative and United Nations Resident Coordinator mentioned to the Inspector that she had been advocating the preparation of such a map for some time.

intervention and activities by the various United Nations agencies in the Grand Sud of Madagascar in the context of the UNDP Programme for Poverty Reduction (but not for the whole country). The map, to a large extent, reflects the Inspector's findings as it demonstrates the scattered, non-integrated, do-it-alone activities carried out by the different United Nations executing agencies in water-related projects, even in nearby locations and within the framework of the same overall programme.

104. It is worth noting that although the contexts in Zambia and Madagascar are different with regard to the UNDAF process,[71] it was largely observed that the operational cooperation and collaboration between the various United Nations agencies through the UNDAF process remain largely at the theoretical level. Moreover, given the limited resources available to each individual United Nations organization, the impact of an individual operational intervention, in particular in the water sector, is rather limited on the standard or quality of life of the targeted community.

105. Indeed, a mid-term review conducted for the UNDAF process in Madagascar in 2001 noted the persistence of some United Nations organizations in "enclosure" (maximum visibility, raising their own flag) and that the image of system unity in front of the Government and other development partners is merely theoretical and fails to be reflected in day-to-day action by the organizations.[72] The same point was also raised by a major bilateral donor during a meeting with the Inspector in Antananarivo, specifically in relation to the United Nations system interventions in the water sector in Madagascar. Moreover, an evaluation report for the UNDP Programme for Poverty Reduction noted, as a main constraint to the achievement of the Programme results, the refusal on the part of some cooperating agencies to become involved in the dynamic of a programme approach, as such attitudes go against the necessary and indispensable synergies among the different components of the Programme.

106. Therefore, the need arises for an "Operational UNDAF" that would reflect integrated interventions in focused selected zones and through joint programmes/projects where the elements of synergies and complementarities are perceived at the outset in the design phase, with a view to maximizing the benefits for the targeted communities and optimizing the impact of the interventions on these communities. Such integrated interventions should be used as pilot programmes/projects to be extended at the national level through the national and local authorities and with the assistance of other donors.

D. PROGRAMME- AND PROJECT-RELATED FINDINGS

1. The WASHE programme (Zambia)

107. The programme, in general, is a good example of integrating the provision of water resources (through construction of wells and boreholes) with sanitation (through construction of latrines) and hygienic education (through animation and communication techniques). The participatory approach was emphasized through the establishment of local water point committees. Schools in rural areas were chosen as original sites for executing the programme, which was then adopted nationwide by the government of Zambia and extended through the various districts and villages, where D-WASHE and V-WASHE committees were established.

108. The Inspector visited several project sites of the programme in different villages and different districts. It is worth noting that among the sites visited, the site with the most successful application of the WASHE concept was a school site where the responsibility for maintaining the water point, cleaning the latrines and ensuring that the hygienic procedures are followed was given to the pupils under the general supervision of the teachers. The site was in a district where UNICEF intervened directly and a well-organized D-WASHE committee has been formed.[73] The application of the concept, including the maintenance of the water points and the latrines, as well as the follow-up by the relevant D-WASHE committee, was much less successful in other project sites visited where the extension of the programme took place through the national and

[71] The first UNDAF for Zambia is being formulated for 2002-2006, while Madagascar was, as mentioned, a pilot country for UNDAF.

[72] "United Nations system in Madagascar, a mutual review of UNDAF", Final report, 8 June 2001.

[73] Monze District, South Province, visited early October 2001.

local authorities. This re-emphasizes the long-standing recognized need for a continuous focus on capacity-building at the national and local levels, especially in relation to the further development of effective operation and maintenance mechanisms. In this context, a systematic follow-up needs to be coordinated between UNICEF (and other United Nations agencies in general) and the national authorities to consolidate the positive results achieved and/or address new problems that may arise.

109. Moreover, one of the visited villages where the WASHE concept was nationally extended with less success in its application and follow-up[74] was actually visited at a certain point by UNICEF itself, but through an intervention of its Health Section in the context of a vaccination campaign, a point that highlights the need for better collaboration, exchange of information and integration of efforts and resources horizontally between the various sections of the same agency (at the same site, a solar-powered water pump that is supposed to provide water for an established rural health centre in the village did not function for years owing to the lack of a spare part for the solar energy equipment provided separately by a bilateral donor).

2. The SIWUP and WIN programmes (Zambia)

110. The visit made to some of the SIWUP project sites confirmed the weakness of the participatory approach for the IFAD-funded SIWUP. The fact that FAO intervened later at those sites through the WIN programme to introduce greater community involvement did not compensate enough for its absence from the beginning and during the execution of the technical aspects of the project. For example, at a SIWUP dam rehabilitation site visited,[75] the meeting with the targeted community, which, in the context of the WIN programme, had been recently sensitized through the establishment of a dam rehabilitation committee, largely reflected a lack of ownership attitude towards the rehabilitated dam (for example no-one paid the financial contribution required to maintain the dam).

111. The need for horizontal complementarities and integrated operational interventions within the same agency also arises in this context. Although FAO provided the technical assistance for the dam rehabilitation, and then intervened later at the site to sensitize the community, no irrigation scheme was developed to convince the population to exploit the land downstream of the dam, and no other complementary activities were undertaken to encourage them to diversify their crops for better nutrition.

3. Water Component in the Grand Sud (Madagascar)

112. The need for capacity-building is most acute in Madagascar. No single national authority exists for water resources management or for sanitation.[76] No water master plan exists for the country, or its provinces. The United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs intervention is mainly targeted to fill these two strategic needs by providing technical support for the establishment of a National Authority for Water and Sanitation, and in preparing a water master plan for the Grand Sud as a step towards the preparation of a national water master plan.

113. Although the project was facing some "managerial difficulties" during the Inspector's mission,[77] it highlights the importance of United Nations technical cooperation and assistance as it focuses on the strategic issues of national institution-building and strategic planning. These aspects are of vital importance for the sustainable development objectives; however, by their very nature, their impact may not be felt immediately, especially by the targeted population, making them sometimes less attractive to some agencies or other development actors. The Inspector believes that this is an area where United Nations technical assistance should be largely focused, given the long accumulated technical expertise of the United Nations, as well as its credibility and commitment to long-term sustainable development objectives.

114. On the other hand, and as noted by the Inspector during his field missions, the need to deliver immediate and concrete services for the

[74] Mukuni village, visited early October 2001.

[75] Siafwakwenda dam, visited early October 2001.

[76] The Rules and Regulations defining the status of ANDEA and its relation with other national institutions in Madagascar were under active consideration during the Inspector's mission in October 2001.

[77] Largely resolved later as communicated to the Inspector.

communities (through the construction of water points in this case) is an urgent humanitarian need, and one that also fulfils political objectives and facilitates project execution with the local authorities and the targeted communities. Therefore, the incorporation of a service delivery component in United Nations technical assistance projects, whether through the United Nations itself, or in collaboration with other agencies or actors in the region, could facilitate the project execution without losing its strategic objectives.

115. In this context, the addition by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the aspect related to the execution of 150 water points for exploitation by the population, while conducting at the same time and as a main task the research and exploratory work needed for the preparation of the regional water master plan, could be considered a good practice.

ANNEX

ZONES OF INTERVENTION AND ACTIVITIES OF THE PROGRAMME MAG/97/008

Water Habitat Fishing Dam Agriculture Micro-finances